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4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

मुण्डक उपनिषत्

Chapter 2

Section 2

Volume 15

33. आविः सन्नहितं गुहाचारं नाम

āvīḥ sannihitam guhācāram nāma

महत् पदं अत्र एतत् समर्पितं ।

mahat padam atra etat samarapitam ।

एजत् प्राणात् निमिषत् च यत् एतत् जानथ

ejat prāṇāt nimiṣat ca yat etat jānatha

सत् असत् वरेण्यं परं विज्ञानात् यत् वरिष्ठं प्रजानाम् ॥ 2 - 2 - 1

sat asat vareṇyam param vijñānāt yat varīṣṭham prajānām ॥

34. यत् अर्चिमत् यत् अणुभ्यः अणुः च

yat arcimat yat aṇubhyaḥ aṇuḥ ca

यस्मिन् लोकाः निहिताः लोकिनः च ।

yasmin lokāḥ nihitāḥ lokinaḥ ca ।

तत् एतत् अक्षरं ब्रह्म सः प्राणः तदु वाङ् मनः

tat etat akṣaram brahma saḥ prāṇaḥ tadu vāṅ manah

तत् एतत् सत्यं तत् अमृतं तत् वेद्व्यं सोम्य विद्धि ॥ 2 - 2 - 2

tat etat satyam tat amṛtam tat veddhvam somya viddhi ॥

In this section, the Upanishad points out the means by which one can recognize, by one's own बुद्धि *buddhi*, the formless All pervading ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, The आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I, already in oneself as ONESELF Itself.

In the opening verse, the Upanishad points out the nature of That ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, which is the target to be reached and recognized by one's own बुद्धि *buddhi*. The Upanishad says:

33. आविः सन्नहितं गुहाचारं नाम

āvīḥ sannihitam guhācāram nāma



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महत् पदं अत्र एतत् समर्पितं ।

mahat padam atra etat samarpitam ।

एजत् प्राणात् निमिषत् च यत् एतत् जानथ

ejat prāṇāt niṣat ca yat etat jānatha

सत् असत् वरेण्यं परं विज्ञानात् यत् वरिष्ठं प्रजानाम् ॥ 2 - 2 - 1

sat asat vareṇyam param vijñānāt yat varīṣṭhaṁ prajānām ॥

The Upanishad uses the word आचिः *āviḥ* to indicate That Formless ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, unfolded in Taittiriya Upanishad as सत् चित् आनन्द स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् *sat cit ānand svarūpa brahman brahman*. The word आचिः *āviḥ* is indclinable. It literally means प्रकाशं *prakāśam* - light, ज्योति स्वरूपं *jyoti svarūpaṁ*, that which is in the form of light, but it is not any particular object light. It is ज्योतिषां अपि तत् ज्योतिः *jyotīṣāṁ api tat jyotiḥ* (G.13.17). It is The Light of all lights. It is the light because of which all objects in this creation shine as they are. Such light is ज्योति स्वरूप शुद्ध चैतन्य आत्मा *jyoti svarūpa śuddha caitanya ātmā* - Self-effulgent Pure Awareness, Pure Consciousness, The Self I in oneself. Thus the word आचिः *āviḥ* does not refer to any object of one's thought. It refers to the light of Pure Awareness, Pure Consciousness, already existing in every conscious being, lighting up every object of one's thought.

One's mind, in its natural outward looking disposition always tends to objectify the meaning of every word. The mind must now learn to look inward of oneself, with आवृत्त चक्षुः *āvṛtta cakṣuḥ* - with the eyes turned inside, so that one can recognize That आचिः *āviḥ* - The Light of Pure Awareness. In order to help one's mind to turn inside, the Upanishad points out That आचिः *āviḥ* as:

आचिः सन्निहितं गुहाचार नाम

āviḥ sannihitam guhacāra nāma

महत् पदं अत्र एतत् समर्पितं ।

mahat padam atra etat samarpitam ।

आचिः सन्निहितं *āviḥ sannihitam*

As Sri Krishna says:

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदिसन्निविष्टः (15 -15)

sarvasya cāhaṁ hr̥disanniviṣṭaḥ



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That is सन्नहितं आविः *sannihitam āviḥ*

हृदि बुद्धौ स्वरूपेण निहितं *hr̥di buddhau svarūpeṇa nihitam* is सन्नहितं आविः *sannihitam āviḥ* - That which abides in the heart and बुद्धि *buddhi*, in the entire अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa* of every person, behind all forms of one's emotional and intellectual recognition and appreciation is सन्नहितं आविः *sannihitam āviḥ* - बुद्धौ स्थितं आविः *buddhau sthitam āviḥ*, आविः *āviḥ* abiding in one's बुद्धि *buddhi*.

That which abides as the very basis, as the very essence of all forms of thinking, including the thinker, That subject I, is सन्नहितं आविः *sannihitam āviḥ*. That means, all thoughts including the "I" thought abide only in That Pure Awareness, आविः *āviḥ*.

Remaining as The self-effulgent light by its very nature, आविः *āviḥ* lights up all forms of thought processes. Thus the word आविः *āviḥ* retains its meaning as light, and at the same time, the word सन्नहितं *sannihitam* negates आविः *āviḥ*, being an object of one's thought.

From the expression आविः सन्नहितं *āviḥ sannihitam* one's बुद्धि *buddhi* learns to appreciate आविः *āviḥ* as That which is The Self I in oneself itself, in the form of ज्योतिषां अपि तत् ज्योतिः *jyotīṣāṃ api tat jyotiḥ*- the self-effulgent light of all lights, as one's Pure Consciousness, Pure Awareness Itself, because of which alone one is aware of any object in existence. Further

आविः गुहाचारं नाम *āviḥ guhacāram nāma* - When the Upanishad says आविः सन्नहितं *āviḥ sannihitam*, बुद्धौ स्थितं *buddhau sthitam*, आविः *āviḥ* - Pure Consciousness abides in one's बुद्धि *buddhi*, it simply means that आविः *āviḥ* is available for recognition only in one's बुद्धि *buddhi*, in particular; it does not mean आविः *āviḥ* is located in one's बुद्धि *buddhi*, or आविः *āviḥ* is confined to one's बुद्धि *buddhi*. In fact, आविः *āviḥ* has no location, and everything one is aware of is located only in आविः *āviḥ* - one's pure consciousness only. Communicating this knowledge, the Upanishad says:

आविः गुहाचारं नाम *āviḥ guhacāram nāma* - That आविः *āviḥ*, which is बुद्धौ स्थितं *buddhau sthitam*, which is available for recognition in one's बुद्धि *buddhi*, is गुहाचारं



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नाम *guhācāram nāma* प्रसिद्धं *prasiddham*, is well-known, is easily recognized as गुहाचारं *guhacāram*, That consciousness pervading all parts of one's body vehicle (उपाधि *upādhi*) गुहाचारं *guhacāram* means गुहायां चरति आचिः *guhāyām carati āviḥ* - That Pure Consciousness abiding in बुद्धि *buddhi* moves freely in all parts of the body vehicle. How?

आचिः दर्शन श्रवण मनन विज्ञानादि उपाधि धर्मैः आचिर्भूतं *āviḥ darśana śravaṇa manana vijñānādi upādhi dharmaiḥ āvibhūrtam* - manifesting Itself in all of one's sense perceptions like seeing, hearing, feeling, etc. and also in all of one's knowledge, thoughts and thought processes

गुहाचारं आचिः *guhacāram āviḥ* - आचिः गुहायां चरति *āviḥ guhāyām carati* - आचिः *āviḥ* moves, says the Upanishad. Does आचिः *āviḥ* - Pure Consciousness really move? No.

चरति इव *carati iva* - It appears as though It moves, because, wherever thoughts, feelings, etc. go, आचिः *āviḥ* - consciousness is already there.

Such movement of आचिः *āviḥ* is like the movement of waves in water. Waves can move only within water. They cannot separate themselves from within water. They cannot separate themselves from water and move. Just as waves are in water and inseparable from water, similarly all sense perceptions and all forms of thoughts and thought processes are in आचिः *āviḥ* only, in consciousness only, and inseparable from consciousness. Further,

महत् मपदं अत्र एतत् समर्पितं *mahat mapadam atra etat samarapitam*

महत् *mahat* - That आचिः *āviḥ* is महत् *mahat* - great. Why? Because, आचिः *āviḥ* - Pure Consciousness being Itself Formless, It is behind all forms. It is the subject for everything - hearing, seeing, thinking, etc. It is all pervasive in all of one's actions, physical or mental. Therefore It is great.

सर्व महत्यात् महत् *sarva mahavāt mahat* - It is great because It pervades all existence.

Generally speaking, the space is considered to be all pervasive. In fact it is not as all-pervasive as आचिः *āviḥ*, because space does not pervade consciousness - Awareness, whereas awareness pervades space. When space disappears, as in deep sleep, it does not pervade awareness. In sleep, space disappears, but one is still conscious. Therefore, that which is truly limitless and all-pervasive is only आचिः *āviḥ*, and that is why It is महत् *mahat* - great.



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पदं, ज्ञानेन पद्यते, ज्ञायते, इति पदं *padam*, *jñānena padyate*, *jñāyate*, *iti padam*
आविः *āvih* - That Pure Consciousness is to be known, can be recognized, only by
knowledge. Recognition of आविः *āvih* has to be achieved by every person as:

तत् ब्रह्म अहं अस्मि इति पद्यते ज्ञायते इति महत् पदं *tat brahma aham asmi iti
padyate jñāyate iti mahat padam* - What is unfolded in the Upanishads as ब्रह्मन्
brahman - That ब्रह्मन् *brahman* I am. Such recognition by knowledge, is indeed
achieving recognition of आविः *āvih*, recognition of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, The Self I Itself in
oneself. Such recognition of The Self I Itself in oneself is महत् पदं *mahat padam* -
reaching the highest destination for every person, reaching which destination there is no
return to संसार *samsār* - the world of transient existence तत् धाम परमं मम *tat
dhāma paramam mama*, as Sri Krishna says (15 - 6)

अत्र एतत् समर्पितं *atra etat samarpitam*

अत्र *atra*, अस्मिन् आविः एव *asmin āvih eva*, अस्मिन् ब्रह्मणि एव *asmin brahmaṇi
eva*, एतत् एतत् सर्वम् *etat etat sarvam*, समर्पितं प्रवेशितं *samarpitam
praveśitam* - In that Pure Awareness alone, in that ब्रह्मन् *brahman* alone, all that
exist in this creation, including the creation itself, have entered into and resolved
themselves without distinction. That means, this entire creation, including all लोकs
lokas, all जीवs *jīvas*, all sense organs, sense objects, experiences, कर्मs *karmas*,
कर्मफलs *karma phalas*, etc., all of them exist, without distinction, losing their individual
identities in that ONE awareness only, in That ब्रह्मन् *brahman* only.

Let us note here the Upanishad words:

आविः सन्निहितं बुद्धौ स्थितं *āvih sannihitam buddhau sthitam* - Pure Awareness is
in बुद्धि *buddhi*

अत्र अस्मिन् आविः एव सर्वम् समर्पितं *atra asmin āvih eva sarvam samarpitam* -
That बुद्धि *buddhi* and all that is recognized by बुद्धि *buddhi*, all of them are in That
Pure Awareness only.

Therefore, just as space is in pot, and pot is in space, so also Awareness is in बुद्धि
buddhi and बुद्धि *buddhi* is in Awareness. बुद्धि *buddhi* is in Awareness simply



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means, अत्र सर्वम् समर्पितं *atra sarvam samarpatim* - everything is only in Awareness. The word सर्वम् *sarvam* - everything is further explained in the next line.

यत् एजत् प्राणात् निमिषत् च *yat ejat prāṇāt nimiṣat ca*

यत् एजत् *yat ejat* - any being which moves

यत् एजत् यत् प्राणात् *yat ejat yat prāṇāt* - any being that breathes

यत् निमिषत् *yat nimiṣat* - any being that winks, which means any being which has sense organs like eyes, etc. Therefore

यत् एजत् प्राणात् निमिषत् च *yat ejat prāṇāt nimiṣat ca* means all beings एतत् सर्वम् *etat sarvam*

अत्र *atra*, अस्मिन् आविः एव *asmin āviḥ eva*, अस्मिन् ब्रह्मणि एव *asmin brahmaṇi eva*, समर्पितं *samarpatim* - all conscious beings are only in Pure Awareness, in

परब्रह्मन् *parabrahman* only. Again, the Upanishad says

यत् आस्पदं सर्वम् *yat āspadam sarvam*, एतत् ब्रह्म *etat brahma*, जानथ *jānatha*

यत् एतत् जानथ *yat etat jānatha* - Try to know, try to recognize, try to reach

एतत् ब्रह्म *etat brahma* - That ब्रह्मन् *brahman*

एतत् आविः *etat āviḥ* - That Pure Consciousness

यत् आस्पदं सर्वम् *yat āspadam sarvam* - on which everything depends

आस्पदं *āspadam* is the base on which one depends. Therefore any object of one's awareness, any कार्य *kārya*, any विषय *viṣaya*, any effect, any object one sees, is सास्पदं *sāspadam*, is dependent on something and That something is आस्पदं *āspadam*.

One can look at any object in existence, and recognize that it depends on some other object in existence. For example, pot depends on clay, which makes clay the basis for the very existence of the pot, and in essence pot is nothing but clay, etc. Similarly, any existent object depends on some other object in existence.

If there is something on which depend all objects in existence, but Itself is totally independent of any object, then That something is the basis for all objects in existence.



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That totally independent basis for all objects in existence is indeed that **ज्योति स्वरूप शुद्ध चैतन्य आत्मा** *jyoti svarūpa śuddha caitanya ātmā*, The **अक्षर ब्रह्मन्** *akṣara brahman*, The **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar* indicated here as **आविः** *āviḥ*, The Self-effulgent light of Pure Consciousness, Pure Awareness, The **आत्मा** *ātmā*, The Self I, already in every self there is.

एतत् आविः एव *etat āviḥ eva*, **एतत् आत्मा एव** *etat ātmā eva*, **एतत् ब्रह्म एव** *etat brahma eva*, **जानथ** *jānatha* - It is That **आविः** *āviḥ*, That **आत्मा** *ātmā*, That **ब्रह्मन्** *brahman*, that needs to be recognized and reached by oneself, by one's own **बुद्धि** *buddhi* vehicle, says the Upanishad. Further

सत् असत् वरेण्यं परं विज्ञानात् यत् वरिष्ठं प्रजानाम् *sat asat vareṇyam paraṁ vijñānāt yat variṣṭhaṁ prajānām*

सत् असत् *sat asat* - Here **सत्** *sat* refers to anything that has a form and **असत्** *asat* refers to anything that has no form. The Upanishad says:

सत् असत् तत् आविः एव *sat asat tat āviḥ eva*, **आत्मा एव** *ātmā eva*, **ब्रह्म एव** *brahma eva*, **इति जानथ** *iti jānatha* - Whatever is in this creation, whether it has a form (such as fire, water, earth, etc.) or it has no form (such as space, air, etc.), all of them arise from That ONE **अक्षर ब्रह्मन्** *akṣara brahman* only. Since the cause is always in the effect, learn to appreciate and recognize all that is **सत्** *sat* or **असत्** *asat* - Formful or formless, in this creation are only different manifestations of that one **आविः** *āviḥ*, The **आत्मा** *ātmā*, The **ब्रह्मन्** *brahman*, indicated earlier. That means, anything in this creation, whether it is **सत्** *sat* or **असत्** *asat*, is non-separate and inseparable from **आविः** *āviḥ* - The Self effulgent Pure Awareness, Self I, already in every self as one's **स्वरूप** *svarūpa* - real nature.

वरेण्यं तदेव वरणीयं *vareṇyam tadeva varaṇīyam*, **प्रार्थनीयं** *prārthanīyam*, **इति जानथ** *iti jānatha* - That **आविः** *āviḥ* alone, That **आत्मा** *ātmā* alone, That **ब्रह्मन्** *brahman* alone, is worthy of adoration, prayer, and achievement in terms of knowledge, because that alone has independent and eternal existence.

Therefore, **जानथ** *jānatha* - learn to understand, appreciate, that gaining totality of knowledge, gaining total freedom, is only to recognize and reach That **आविः** *āviḥ*, That



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आत्मा *ātmā*, That ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, already in the heart and बुद्धि *buddhi* of every person (आविः सन्नहितं *āvih sannihitam*). Further,
प्रजानां विज्ञानात् *prjānām vijñānāt*, यत् परं यत् वरिष्ठं ज्ञानं *yat param yat varisṭham jñānam*,
तत् अविज्ञानं *tat avirjñānam*, ब्रह्मज्ञानं *brahmajñānam*, आत्मज्ञानं इति जानथ *ātmajñānam iti jānatha*

प्रजानां विज्ञानं *prjānām vijñānam* is लौकिक विज्ञानं *laukika vijñānam*. All areas of objective knowledge sought after and gained by people, for purposes of various kinds of worldly activities, that is लौकिक विज्ञानं *laukika vijñānam*. The Upanishad says:
इति जानथ *iti jānatha* - Please learn to understand, appreciate, realize and recognize clearly this extraordinary fact, namely:

प्रजानां विज्ञानात् यत् परं ज्ञानं *prjānām vijñānāt yat param jñānam* - That knowledge which is परं *param*, far higher, far superior, to gaining only लौकिक विज्ञानं *laukika vijñānam* - worldly knowledge, and also
यत् वरिष्ठं ज्ञानं वरतमं *yat varisṭham jñānam varatamaṁ* (superlative) ज्ञानं *jñānam* - That knowledge which is most valuable, the most precious, the most sacred and the most worshipful knowledge is:

तत् अविज्ञानं *tat avirjñānam* - That knowledge about आविः *āvih* - The ज्योति स्वरूप शुद्ध चैतन्य आत्मा *jyoti svarūpa śuddha caitanya ātmā*, The Self-effulgent Pure Awareness, Pure Consciousness, That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman*, That आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self I already in every person, indicated in the teachings thus far.

इति जानथ *iti jānatha* - That is the knowledge to be gained, recognized and reached by oneself.

Again, indicating That आविः *āvih*, That ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, That आत्मा *ātmā*, the target to be recognized by knowledge, and reached by one's own बुद्धि *buddhi*, the Upanishad continues:

34. यत् अर्चिमत् यत् अणुभ्यः अणुः च
yat arcimat yat aṇubhyaḥ aṇuḥ ca
यस्मिन् लोकाः निहिताः लोकिनः च ।
yasmin lokāḥ nihitāḥ lokinaḥ ca ।



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तत् एतत् अक्षरं ब्रह्म सः प्राणः तद् वाङ् मनः

tat etat akṣaram brahma saḥ prāṇaḥ tadu vāṅ manaḥ

तत् एतत् सत्यं तत् अमृतं तत् वेद्व्यं सोम्य विद्धि ॥ 2 - 2 - 2

tat etat satyam tat amṛtam tat veddhvyaṁ somya viddhi ॥

यत् अर्चिमत् *yat arcimat* - That which is The आचिः *āvih*, The all-pervasive bright self-luminous light of pure Consciousness, the light of Pure Awareness, The ज्योतिषां अपि *apī tat*, The Light ज्योति *jyoti* of all lights, shining as the ज्योति स्वरूप आत्मा *jyoti svarūpa ātmā*, the Self I in every person, and indeed in every self there is

यत् अणुभ्यः अणुः च *yat aṇubhyaḥ aṇuḥ ca* - That which is smaller than the smallest one can think of, That which is more subtle than the most subtle one can think of, and (महतो महीयान् *mahato mahīyān*) च *ca* also bigger than the biggest one can think of (कठ *kaṭha* - 2 - 20)

यस्मिन् (सर्वे *sarve*) लोकाः निहिताः *yasmin lokāḥ nihitāḥ* - That in which all the worlds of beings in this creation, such as Earth, Heaven, etc. are held fixed in their own places, together with

लोकिनः च *lokinaḥ ca* - all the dwellers in those worlds, because all of them depend on That आचिः *āvih* only for their very existence

तत् एतत् अक्षरं ब्रह्म *tat etat akṣaram brahma* - That is what अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman* - Immortal ब्रह्मन् *brahman* is, indicated earlier (verse 1 - 1 - 6) as अद्रेश्यं *adreśyam*, अग्राह्यं *agrāhyam*, अगोत्रं *agotraṁ*, अवर्णम् *avarṇam*, अचक्षुः श्रोत्रं *acakṣuḥ śrotraṁ*, अपाणिपादं *apāṇipādaṁ*, नित्यं *nityam*, विभुः *vibhuḥ*, सर्वगतं *sarvagataṁ*, सुसूक्ष्मं *susūkṣmaṁ*, अव्ययं *avyayam* and भूतयोनिम् *bhūtayonim*. Further,

सः प्राणः *saḥ prāṇaḥ* - That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman* is सर्वायुष प्राणः *sarvāyuṣa prāṇaḥ* - Universal Life for all beings. Being so, It is प्राणरूप प्रत्यक्ष ब्रह्मन् *prāṇarūpa pratyakṣa brahman*;

one's ability to breath Itself is direct manifestation of That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman* only.



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

तत् तत् उ वाक् *tat tat u vāk* - ability to communicate knowledge through spoken words, such as organ of speech itself, is direct manifestation of That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman* only. Again

तत् उ मनः *tat u manaḥ* - the ज्ञानस्वरूप *jñānasvarūpa* of one's mind, the knowledge-nature of one's mind, is direct manifestation of That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman* only

तत् एतत् सत्यं *tat etat satyaṁ* - It is That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman* that is सत्यं *atyam* - Absolute Reality of all existence, never subject to change

तत् अमृतं *tat amṛtaṁ* - It is That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman* that is Immortal, Ever existent

तत् वेद्व्यं *tat veddhavyaṁ* - It is That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman* that one should learn to recognize and reach by one's own बुद्धि *buddhi*. It is the ultimate destination to reach by knowledge. Therefore,

सौम्य *saumya* - O! Saunaka

विद्धि *viddhi* - Please understand all that has been pointed out thus far about That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman* and try to reach That अक्षर ब्रह्मन् *akṣara brahman* by your own बुद्धि *buddhi* vehicle, says the Upanishad. How to do that, we will see next time.